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ABSTRACT

This manual for state, district, and local school officials and employers provides information and techniques for designing and implementing successful cooperative education programs for students with special needs. An introduction defines "special needs" and discusses characteristics of successful programs. Information on selecting and training teacher/coordinators is accompanied by an assessment instrument. These topics are then addressed: vocational guidance, recruiting students with special needs, preparing special needs students for work, motivation, selective job development and placement, skilled supervision, job design, and structuring the work experiences. Information on the training agreement and training plan is provided, followed by assessment instruments for the materials developed. The manual also discusses support services, improving learning at the workplace, employment after graduation, recognition for supporters, and followup evaluation. Six examples of approaches and materials used in cooperative education programs are given. Other contents include a description of a program for students with special needs, Project Work/Ability--California; hints for improving various elements; an annotated listing of outside resources; two self-assessment instruments for program review; and a bibliography of resources for coordinators and administrators of programs for students with special needs. (YLB)

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COOPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

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COOPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Preface

This manual was developed to meet the need expressed by state, district, and local school officials and employers for information and techniques to design and implement successful cooperative education programs for students with special needs. There are professionals in every state who conduct research and demonstration projects and provide direct services for programs serving handicapped and disadvantaged students. Unfortunately many teacher/coordinators do not make use of the services of the experts. We hope that this material will provide needed useful information and guidance and direct teacher/coordinators to seek help from their state education departments.

The manual brings together a number of the key elements(1) and special information useful for designing and conducting cooperative education for special needs students. It should be considered complimentary to the information and guidance provided by the state department of education and the other NCLC manuals.(2) The focus is on cooperative education. There is no attempt to duplicate information in manuals and texts in guidance, counseling or other special education areas.

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(1) See "Keys to Cooperative Education Programs," National Child Labor Committee, 1984.

(2) Titles of other National Child Labor Committee manuals are listed on pages 100 and 101.

Helping students, who have "special needs," participate in cooperative education and become competitive in the labor market is one of the most difficult areas in cooperative education.

Without the linked education and work experience of cooperative education, many of these students will leave school unable to compete for jobs. They will tend to join the ranks of the permanently unemployed or, at best, become members of the secondary labor market.

As long as teacher/coordinators are rated solely on the number of placements there will be a great tendency to "cream," that is, to place the most employable students -- those with the least need. While work experience is desirable for all students it is not a judicious use of limited resources to give preference to students who are going on to higher education. Special needs students need and can benfit most from cooperative work experience opportunities to become competitive in the labor market. It is one of the very few ways they can obtain a letter of recommendation from an employer -- "documented employability."

Senior year capstone cooperative education and even programs starting in the eleventh year may be too late for some special needs students. Early preparation for cooperative work experience and promise of placement may help many make a decision to continue in the eighth, ninth, and tenth years and motivate them to improve attendance and learning.

We have not included material for this younger group in this booklet. However, special needs students should be identified and prepared for cooperative education in these earlier grades.

INTRODUCTION

We consider students with "special needs" to be educationally disadvantaged students, handicapped students and others who have greater difficulty in obtaining good job placements than other cooperative education students. Public Law 94-482 defines handicapped and disadvantaged students:

> ...The term 'handicapped,' when applied to persons, means persons who are mentally retarded, hard of hearing, deaf, speech impaired, visually handicapped, seriously emotionally disturbed, crippled, or other health impaired persons who by reason thereof require special education and related services, and who, because of their handicapping condition, cannot succeed in the regular vocational education without special education assistance or who require a modified vocational education program.
>
> ...The term 'disadvantaged' means persons (other than handicapped persons) who have academic or economic handicaps and who require special services and assistance in order to enable them to succeed in vocational education programs, under criteria developed by the commissioner based on objective standards and the most recent available data.

The economically disadvantaged are defined as those whose family incomes are at or below the poverty level, or whose parents are unemployed or receive public assistance, or who are institutionalized or under state guardianship.

In short, special needs students comprise all students who are at a disadvantage in obtaining regular employment after graduation.

Program objectives for these students beyond those for other students include:

- helping students acquire confidence in their ability to succeed,
- providing remediation and special instruction needed to meet job requirements,
- recruiting informed employers who can provide job stations in which the students can learn and become productive workers,
- providing support services needed to ensure that the experience will be satisfying for both students and employers,
- ensuring that every student obtains "documented employability,"
- individual follow up to help the students secure employment after they are graduated.

Gary Lloyd, in his study of cooperative education and review of the literature, noted that some teacher/coordinators "have developed plans for and are enrolling disadvantaged students in their cooperative education programs, (but) the large majority of teacher/coordinators, 87 percent, are not enrolling or dealing with handicapped students as part of the cooperative program.(3) Our field

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(3) Gary Lloyd, "Cooperative Vocational Education: The Heart of Career Training," Workplace Education, November-December, 1982.

studies indicate that when these students are provided with work opportunities it is usually work-study not connected with their vocational education.

Some schools with outstanding cooperative education programs report good programs for one or two special needs categories. None claim good programs for all. Most cooperative education programs serve only students who are neither seriously disadvantaged nor seriously handicapped. The irony is that these special needs students have the greatest need for cooperative education and can benefit the most from participation. Few special needs students continue education beyond high school. They must be helped to become competitive in the labor market before leaving high school.

Working closely with special education specialists, some teacher/coordinators have developed effective programs. The key factors include:

- cooperation between special education specialists and teacher/coordinators,
- sharing of resources,
- special training for teacher/coordinators,
- recognizing and tailoring work assignments to the needs of the individual students,
- making use of community, state and federal resources.

Cooperative education is an effective means of motivating and providing education for educationally disadvantaged students. They tend to learn more quickly by "doing," on the job, than by classroom instruction. Similarly, cooperative education is

an effective means to serve physically handicapped and mentally retarded students. Experiences on the job can provide rewards for special needs students they do not get in the classroom. Some of these are:

- association with adults,
- recognition for a job well done,
- a sense of accomplishment,
- a feeling of responsibility,
- acceptance of responsibility,
- challenge and success, and
- being trusted.

Grades, attendance, and attitudes of special needs students in a cooperative education program can improve significantly. They find meaning for education and reasons for improving their computational and reading skills. They tend to work harder on improving these, and do improve.

Many special needs students have to learn and accept to be a worker: come on time, meet deadlines, accept responsibility, produce quality goods or services, interact positively and cooperate with supervisors and co-workers, etc.

In an experiential program for special needs students(4) evaluators identified four factors which appear to be critical for program success:

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(4) Thomas R. Owens, "Experience-Based Career Education: Summary and Implications of Research and Evaluation Findings," Child and Youth Services Journal, V4, Nos. 3/4, 1982.

1. A dedicated staff who believe in the philosophy of experiential education and enjoy serving as learning coordinators rather than as subject matter instructors.

2. Supportive administrators willing to sell the program, take some risks and work out the extra details required.

3. The active involvement of the youth themselves in modifying the program, recruiting fellow students, and communicating the program to people in the community.

4. Freedom of staff and students to adapt or modify the model to local needs.

These are in addition to the ten criteria identified by Schilit and Lacey(5) as characteristics of successful school to work programs:

1. Commitment by school superintendents and company chief executive officers.

2. Efforts by business associations to mobilize local resources.

3. Ample time and resources for planning.

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(5) Schilit, S. and Lacey, R., The Private Sector Youth Connection. Volume I: School to Work. New York, New York. Vocational Foundation, Inc. 1982. Reported in "Partnerships in Business and Education," the Vocational Studies Center, University of Wisconsin at Madison.

4. An initial small manageable pilot program which expanded gradually.

5. Evaluation built in program design with timely feedback.

6. In-kind services and personnel provided by local business to supplement school resources.

7. Quality staff, particularly a trusted and respected program director.

8. Employers involved in identifying aptitudes and skills to match youth to jobs/training and screening to assure successful experiences for youth and companies.

9. Pre-employment training designed to meet employers' requirements.

10. Companies willing to train or provide temporary jobs for in-school youth.

Some recent research findings relating to competitive employment for the mentally retarded(6) are also applicable to the educationally disadvantaged and other "special needs" students. Some of the findings are:

1. The retarded are capable of more challenging work than is provided in sheltered workshops or by many employers.

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(6) Reported in "Research Utilization Update," June 1984, Community Council of Greater New York.

2. It is cost effective to prepare retarded people to meet employers' demands and needs by training at the actual workplace.

3. The public school should actively seek to prepare these students for employment at an early age and to educate parents about their children's vocational options.

4. In a recent study(7), reporting employers rated retarded workers they employed as equal or better than other workers they employed.

Special needs students benefit from extra efforts for:

- recruiting for cooperative education;
- vocational guidance;
- preparation for work;
- selective job development and placement;
- motivation;
- training agreements and training plans;
- job design;

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(7) "A Transitional Employment Strategy for the Mentally Retarded: Final Implementation Report of the STETS Demonstration," J. Riccio and M. Price, Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation, New York 1984.

- structure on the job;
- skilled supervision;
- support services.

These and other elements are discussed in this manual.

Selecting and Training Teacher/Coordinators

Teacher/coordinators who serve special needs students need to be special people. They must want to work with and help this special population and be willing to put out for them to a degree beyond what an administrator may demand. But wanting to help and being willing to make extra efforts are only necessary conditions.

In addition, the teacher/coordinator must be prepared and able to:

- recruit and help employers to create a work environment and conditions which will reduce the barriers faced by the student,
- assist students to surmount the barriers they face, and
- help students and employers to find alternatives when a placement does not work out.

It is the responsibility of the local educational agency to recruit dedicated teachers and to ensure that they are adequately prepared to carry out their responsibilities. Some preparation prior to taking on the job as teacher/coordinator for special needs students is essential. Some skills and abilities can be acquired only after experience on the job demonstrates need. In any event, training and support for these dedicated people must be continuous if "burnout" is to be avoided and growth is to take place.

There are no independent study materials for teacher/coordinators for "special needs" students. However, there are thirteen performance-based teacher education modules for teachers serving students with special/exceptional needs developed by the National Center for Research in Vocational Education which are useful.(18)

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(8) Serving Students with Special/Exceptional Needs, available from American Association for Vocational Instructional Materials, University of Georgia, 120 Driftmier Engineering Center, Athens, Georgia 30602

The following pages are an instrument for assessing the selection and training of teacher/coordinators for special needs students.

Assessing the Selection and Training of Teacher/Coordinators for Students with Special Needs

Definition: Minimum requirements and methods for selecting, assigning, and training personnel assigned as cooperative education coordinators for students with special needs.

Characteristics	Assessment
1. There are requirements beyond those for classroom teachers and for other teacher/coordinators	_____
2. These teacher/coordinators have completed the required courses for full certification, including courses in special education	_____
a) percentage certified	_____
b) percentage having higher qualifications than required	_____
c) non-certified are taking steps to obtain certification	_____
3. The teacher/coordinators have appropriate experience working	
a) in private industry for at least one year	_____
b) as a teacher/coordinator for at least one year	_____
c) with students with special needs	_____
4. The processes and criteria for selecting teacher/coordinators:	
a) are well defined, based on competence	_____
b) test commitment to working with special needs students	_____
c) are industry-related	_____

Characteristics	Assessment
d) require knowledge of resources to help special needs students	_____
e) are evaluated regularly	_____
f) include advisory committee participation	_____
g) include district coordinator participation	_____
h) include a probationary period which is used to eliminate the unwilling and incompetent	_____
5. In-service training and development for these teacher/coordinators include:	
a) orientation to cooperative education for special needs students	_____
b) district-wide meetings for both teacher/coordinators and special education teachers	_____
c) workshops on special topics	_____
d) performance evaluation and feedback	_____
e) other (describe below)	_____
6. The content of training for teacher/coordinators includes:	
a) state and district rules and guidelines	_____
b) advisory committees	_____
c) labor market analysis	_____
d) identifying training stations for special needs students	_____
e) recruiting and selecting students	_____
f) orienting students	_____
g) orienting employers and supervisors to special needs students	_____

Characteristics	Assessment
h) developing training plans	_____
i) visiting and monitoring worksites	_____
j) training work supervisors	_____
k) relating in-school and on-the-job learning	_____
l) using students' performance evaluations effectively	_____
m) complying with labor laws	_____
n) maintaining public relations	_____
o) obtaining and using other organizational and community resources	_____
p) modifying the workplace and the job to meet special needs	_____
q) developing support and using remedial programs for special needs students	_____
r) record keeping	_____
s) placing graduates	_____
t) evaluating students' progress	_____
u) program evaluation	_____
v) other (describe below)	_____

Overall Assessment and Recommendations

Remarks

Name and title of person making this assessment

Date

Vocational Guidance

While many career decisions are made before a student applies for cooperative education, proper vocational guidance leading to appropriate job placement is crucial. Special needs students tend to have less information about appropriate work experience, fewer role models engaged in appropriate employment and fewer trustworthy sources of information about occupational opportunities. This may lead to insecurity and resistance to vocational counseling.

Most guidance counselors focus on helping students select and gain admission to appropriate post-secondary institutions. Many are not completely prepared to help students who will enter the labor market after graduation. Few are able to provide effective vocational counseling to disadvantaged and handicapped students. However, with increased funding and availability of special education teachers, the situation is improving. Counseling staff should be in close contact with organizations representing handicapped groups and receive special training in counseling and providing guidance for special needs students. There is need to help raise occupational aspirations while keeping expectations within realistic bounds.

The teacher/coordinator cannot assume that there have been accurate evaluations of interests, values, motivation, ability and potential for each student. Or, that these have been discussed with the student and the student's parents, and agreement with respect to vocational goals reached. It is necessary for the teacher/coordinator to review each case to make sure that there has been appropriate vocational guidance and decision making. If there are not trained people to counsel the at-risk population and provide the teacher/coordinator with the necessary

information, it is desirable to seek assistance from an outside organization which can. There are many special organizations which provide guidance for the physically and mentally handicapped.

The process and criteria for vocational assessment should relate closely to those used by employers for evaluating applicants for entry-level jobs in the specific occupation and industry.

Pre-evaluation at each stage of the student's development, of variables which influence career planning, is essential to provide progressive challenge to maximize the student's potential. Without accurate evaluation, there is a tendency to keep special needs students in jobs for which they are overqualified. This can result in failure to develop and a tendency to retrogress, leading to dissatisfied students and frustrated employers. Keeping guidance counselors and special education teachers involved is one way to avoid this pitfall.

The decision with respect to work stations should be made after review of vocational interest and aptitude test results and in-school performance. The barriers indicated by the student's records and specific handicap and how to overcome these should be discussed with the student, the parents, vocational counselors, and the special education teacher. Only then should the plans be developed for placement, on-the-job training, and related in-school education.

Commitments with respect to placement and training should not be made definitive before appropriate work stations have been identified and recruited.

Recruiting Students with Special Needs

More positive and careful recruitment is required for special needs students than for other students. Recruitment has to be:

- forceful, to overcome the resistance of students and parents who don't believe that success in a real job is possible;
- honest, problems and barriers must not be ignored to avoid reenforcing the belief of some parents that all handicaps can be overcome and that success is easy;
- started early, in the tenth year if possible, to make sure that the student is work-ready by the twelfth year and to provide accurate information about aptitudes and competencies;
- not dependent on the usual evaluation data and criteria; these tend to produce biased evaluations for special needs students. (9) If preparation for employment is started in the tents year and experiences are documented and recorded, the data obtained tend to be more valid.

(9) See an analysis of sources of bias in "Hidden Inequities Can Be Overcome," Janice R. Mokros, Vocational Education, May, 1984.

Recruitment should be based on information about the students and the job market to be reasonably sure that the special needs of these students can be met in the existing job market.

The students' decisions to participate and prepare for employment will be influenced by their parents, fellow students, friends, counselors, and teachers. Efforts should be made to involve each of these groups in the recruitment effort.

Positive attitudes toward cooperative education on the part of these groups will help make recruitment effective. Presentations at faculty meetings and in student assemblies dealing with cooperative education should point up opportunities for special needs students. Counselors and special education teachers should have active roles in the identification and recruitment of potential participants and their selection.

While it is safe to recruit and prepare students for jobs which are available, it is highly desirable to determine students' interests and potentials and to seek jobs which would be appropriate for them. Thus there should be early and ongoing discussions with special education teachers and counselors to identify characteristics of appropriate work stations.

A presentation before parents of special needs students can be helpful both for recruiting students and recruiting employers.

The application and enrollment procedures, the selection and placement criteria, and the responsibilities of all involved including teachers, students and parents should be well defined, communicated to all concerned, and accepted by them.

Recruitment efforts must be planned, carefully implemented and be strong and positive but must not over promise.

Preparing Special Needs Students for Work

While all students need to prepare to make the transition to the world of work, special needs students require more thorough preparation. Success in obtaining and keeping a job is determined by a number of variables, including the student's previous experience, the views and experiences of people the student admires, ability to make social adjustments, self-confidence, respect for authority, basic vocational skills, the nature of the work place, the character of supervision and acceptance on the job.

Failure to make good social adjustment stems from anxiety with respect to acceptance and competence, jealousy and hostility toward other people, overdependence, poor self-image, hyperactivity, emotionality, resistance toward authority, and inability to cooperate with others. Only a few of these are amenable to efforts in school and on-the-job. However, those that are, are important. The most important objectives are:

- developing good work habits,
- increasing job competency,
- increasing confidence and self-reliance.

Helping students make the shift from dependence to self-reliance is perhaps the most important element in helping special needs students become productive workers.

Employers willing to risk employing special needs students tend to be more concerned with work habits and behavior than entry skills. Consequently, education and training to develop and maintain good work habits must be emphasized

and good behavior continually reinforced. In preparing these students, work simulation exercises are useful learning techniques. These include signing in on time, learning through use of on-the-job training approaches, following directions, working in a team, and accepting and using feedback through performance evaluation.

Students have to understand the nature of the barriers in getting and keeping employment if they are to overcome them. They must be conditioned to set their sights high.

Adequate preparation will take longer for some than others. It should be tailored to the specific needs of each student. This may require individual instruction, and changing the curriculum based on feedback from students and employers.

While the following approaches should be used both in school and on the job for all students, they are essential for special needs students:

- Treat each student as an individual. Provide individual instruction whenever possible. Work at all times with the special education teachers, the counselor and other resource persons. Look for changes in the student's attitude, capability, dress, etc. Provide feedback to students on their progress in a positive manner.

- Establish a supportive relationship. Listen to students and respond appropriately. Make sure students understand you. Maintain high

expectations which they are capable of fulfilling.

- Set realistic requirements and objectives. Enunciate and enforce rules and regulations. Evaluate learning and performance regularly and provide feedback. Help students accept responsibility for their actions. Require that work be done on time and that directions are followed. Emphasize cooperation, politeness, and courtesy.

- Provide numerous opportunities for success.

- Provide structure in the learning experience.

- Stimulate them to think about their futures. Develop exercises and experiences which will lead them to think about many possible future job roles. Help them be realistic about their opportunities without becoming pessimistic.

- Stay on top of the situation at all times. Step in whenever it appears that something may go wrong. Maintain control of the classroom situation to the same extent that the work supervisor would on the job.

While preparation must assume that every student can obtain a job and be a productive worker, limitations, particularly those of the retarded, should not be lost sight of. Preparation should focus on a specific job and only later, during the work experience, broadened to encompass a range of jobs.

Motivation

To a greater extent than for other students, it is necessary for special needs students to want to succeed, to believe they can succeed, and to be willing to make strong efforts to succeed.

A major obstacle in the way of motivating for success is their expectations for failure. This results from experiences of failures in the past. These experiences lead many to question their ability to succeed in anything having to do with school or work and to distrust adults who say that they want to help.

The first step in being able to motivate these students is to gain their confidence and trust. This calls for putting all cards on the table and discussing frankly the barriers and opportunities for employment and what can be gained by participating in cooperative work experience. This is primarily the job of the vocational counselor and the special education teacher. However, since most of these have had little experience with cooperative education, it is the responsibility of the teacher/coordinator to inform them and to motivate them to give more than lip service to the usefulness of cooperative education to meet the employment needs of these students. The second step is to provide learning experiences in a simulated work environment, which are related to the anticipated work placement and tailored to insure success. Satisfactory behavior and performance should be positively reinforced.

Repeated, short-term success is necessary to maintain interest, to help students learn and internalize the desired behavior, and to improve their self-images. When they begin to expect success, the motivation for the desired behavior is strengthened and the time between good performance and

recognition can increase. For most of these students, changes in behavior tend to precede changes in outlook. Consequently, don't spend too much time with detailed, rational explanation. Focus on changing behavior. A simple reason to give to motivate change is, "This is what you have to do to keep a job."

Increased motivation for appropriate behavior is more dependent on significant environmental support than on cognitive processes. For example, the fact that retarded workers tend to persevere in tasks longer than non-retarded people was once attributed to inherent cognitive rigidity. Recent studies indicate that this perseverance is primarily a result of perceived environmental support.

The third step is to ensure that the learned behavior is carried over and continued on the job. This is the domain of the teacher/coordinator. Continued motivation to produce, learn and succeed requires that work rules be understood by the student, there be good communications and a stable structure at work, tasks sequenced for early and repeated success and recognition of success, and students be given strong support by teacher/coordinators and supervisors. This calls for training supervisors to perform their roles effectively and for teacher/coordinators and work supervisors to present consistent, mutually supportive attitudes.

Thus, motivating students has five elements:

1. Crafting the in-school learning to dovetail with the requirements of the workplace.

2. Preparing students for the transition to work.

3. Maintaining strong links between school and work.

4. Motivating and training supervisors to coordinate and harmonize their approaches and activities with those of the teacher/coordinator.

5. Continuous monitoring and evaluating to make necessary changes, provide support, etc.

Certainty of placement and a reasonable opportunity for a job after graduation can be the strongest motivators for special needs students. One way to get the message across is to describe real, potential placements during the preparation period and to have two or three successful students from earlier classes talk to the students.

Selective Job Development and Placement

Two good leads for identifying employers who are able to provide the appropriate work experience and supervision, and who may be willing to employ special needs students are:

- employers who employ any category of special needs workers, and
- employers who have had a fairly long, generally successful experience in employing cooperative education students.

Employers with the first of these characteristics can be identified by: State Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, State youth agencies, Epilepsy Foundation, United Cerebral Palsy, State Commissions for the Blind, Association for the Mentally Retarded, special education staff, and local Departments of Social Welfare. The Private Industry Council and community-based organizations can also be helpful.

Companies doing business with the federal government are required by Seciton 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, to have affirmative action programs for handicapped workers. They can meet the requirements by employing handicapped cooperative education students. This is an incentive for these companies to participate.

Most employers have had no experience with handicapped workers and are ignorant of the research data which demonstrate how well the handicapped perform on the job. It is highly desirable to know the research and the case studies and be able to refer to them. There is nothing which is as convincing as a verified track record.

The following are some studies to which you can refer.

A U.S. Civil Service commission study (10) found "...that disabled workers had a lower rate of attrition, had less time lost due to accidents and had their absentee records compare favorably with the records of non-disabled."

The United States Office of Vocational Rehabilitation conducted a survey involving 100 large corporations. They compared the disabled to able bodied employees and reported (11) the following:

	No Difference	Disabled Lower	Disabled Higher
Job Productivity	66%	10%	24%
Accident Rates	40%	58%	2%
Absentee Rates	40%	55%	5%
Turnover Rates	16%	83%	1%

(10) Ailene Turner, "Employment from Sheltered to Competetive," Journal of the American Association for Rehabilitation Therapy, Inc., Spring, 1981, p. 8.

(11) Henry A. Tombari, "Lending a Hand to the Handicapped: A Primer for Business," S.A.M. Advanced Management Journal, Autumn, 1979, p. 49.

In a survey performance of 125 handicapped workers in AT&T, there were no injuries, fewer absences and greater productivity than non-handicapped workers.(12)

The willingness of a company to participate is not enough. The jobs must meet the requirements of the career plan developed with the student. This may involve convincing the company official to redesign a job, or to agree to allow the teacher/coordinator to work closely with the supervisor in the first weeks of employment or to some other special arrangement. The important thing is to ensure that the placement will meet the needs and expectations of the student and the employer. For both it is highly desirable to focus on the short-term objectives to provide a good opportunity for the student to learn and to demonstrate competence to do the job.

Achieving the long-term objective, to make the student competitive in the labor market, is dependent on achieving the short-term objectives.

As far as possible, job assignments should be made on the same basis as for other students. However, some tasks may involve activities that present difficulties for students with a specific handicap. Review the job descriptions and identify the essential tasks for each job. Discuss the required competencies with the supervisor. Look ahead to what the tasks will be at later

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(12) Information from the National Information Center for Handicapped Children and Youth, 1983.

stages of the student's employment. Determine which tasks the student can perform upon entry, which can be learned during employment and which may be beyond the student's competence. With respect to the last, determine which tasks can be simplified or given to other workers.

If possible, have the student try to do tasks before a final assignment is made. Work with the employer on the test assignment--together you will be better able to evaluate each student's chances for success.

Sometimes a coordinator assumes that the special needs student will not be able to handle a task, and unnecessarily limits the student's assignment. Don't assume! Ask. Test. Know.

A Du Pont study (13) found that the great majority of its 2,745 identified handicapped employees performed at average levels or above in safety, attendance, and job duties. Five key elements contributed to the successful performance of handicapped employees:

1. Management concern for the safety and well-being of all employees.

2. Careful placement of handicapped employees to maximize their abilities.

3. An effective safety program.

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(13) E. I. Du Pont de Nemours and Company, "Equal to the Task," 1981.

4. Cooperation of non-handicapped employees.

5. Reasonable accommodations to address the special needs of handicapped employees. The cost of most accommodations was nominal.

A U.S. Department of Labor (14) study of 2,000 federal contractors to determine the nature, extent and cost of accommodations made for handicapped workers showed:

1. 51% (488) of the 915 firms responding reported no costs incurred to accommodate handicapped workers;

2. 30% (278) reported costs of less than $500.00;

3. 8% (73) reported costs between $500.00 and $2,000.00;

4. 8% (73) reported costs of more than $2,000.00.

Nature of accommodations:

1. 21.0%, adaptions of the work environment and location;

2. 15.2%, provision of special equipment and assistance;

3. 22.9%, job modifications;

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(14) U.S. Department of Labor, Employment Standards Administration, "A Study of Accommodations Provided to Handicapped Employees by Federal Contractors." Final Report, June 17, 1982.

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4. 13.9%, training and transfer,

5. 18.0%, oriented,

6. 9%, miscellaneous.

Skilled Supervision

As for every other student, skilled, interested supervision is a necessary condition for providing effective work experience for special needs students. (15) Few supervisors have had experience in supervising students and even fewer students with special needs. The teacher/coordinator has to be ready to provide training, advice, and support services for supervisors.

Orientation for supervisors should fit the conditions and needs of the specific workplace, supervisor and students. Supervisors should be informed in detail about the relationships among student, teacher/coordinator and supervisor -- what the school expects of them and what they can expect from the school. Supervisors need to know much more about the individual students, their backgrounds, needs and goals, what students expect from work, and what they believe is expected of them at work.

To a greater extent than other students, special needs students may not have worked before. The structure, expectations, language and relationships of the workplace may be new. They need help and time to adjust, to know what is expected of them and to learn to respond effectively. They need good role models. All of this should be discussed with the supervisor.

The focus of supervising special needs students should be on performance. Students may know they should be on time for work, but may not come on time.

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(15) Consult NCLC's Keys to Cooperative Education Programs, Volume II, The key element, "Evaluation of Students' Work Performance by Employers," includes a performance evaluation manual. NCLC also has prepared A Hip Pocket Manual for Supervisors of Youth Workers which can be duplicated and distributed to supervisors.

The supervisor must be encouraged to insist from day-one that rules must be obeyed. Superviors should be discouraged from making special dispensations. When rules are not followed there must be acceptable reasons why they are not. However, it should be recognized that there may be other factors involved which should be considered. Students' work habits and skills cannot be considered in isolation from each other. Sometimes poor behavior results from a feeling of inability to perform adequately.

Supervisors have to maintain closer relations with these students than with other workers. These students seek closer relations. Most tend to comply with instructions when compliance leads to social interaction with the supervisor. Compliance seems to decrease when it leads to terminating social interaction.

Not all of these students are good workers. Some are hard to get along with. Some may not always be on time. They are in these respects the same as other workers. Poor behavior is only infrequently related to the disability. Consequently, students with special needs should be evaluated using the same standards as for other workers.

A special needs student will not be devastated by supportive correction. The focus should be on how to perform correctly, not on what was wrong; on the behavior or the performance, not on the person.

Discipline is action taken to change willful, unacceptable behavior. It should be constructive not destructive. The focus should be on changing unacceptable behavior, not punishment. Punishment tends to cause these workers to withdraw. Help to change can draw them out.

The supervisor should discuss unsatisfactory behavior or performance with the student. The discussion should deal with the specific incidents of poor behavior and performance and how to behave and

perform in similar circumstances in the future, and not on changing abstract characteristics as "reliable" and "hard working."

Areas in which supervisors can expect that special needs students may need help, in the beginning, are:

- understanding and accepting the importance of completing work tasks on schedule;
- relating to authority positively;
- achieving quality control standards;
- developing required work behaviors, especially those that may not be obvious to them, such as calling in when unable to come to work;
- reporting difficulties in achieving standards and asking for help;
- relating to co-workers in a cooperative rather than in a dependent manner.

Supervisors must learn that they are expected to be supervisors not surrogate parents, friends, social-workers or confidants. Special needs students are familiar with adults in these roles, try to place all adults in one or another of them, and supervisors sometimes accept the roles. This is not helpful for development. There are others to play these roles. Students must learn to accept and respond appropriately to a new adult role: work supervision. To help them do this is an important supervisory task.

A common question asked by supervisors is, "What should I tell the workers in my department?" If the student has a visible handicap or obvious mental retardation, workers will recognize the disability by themselves. However, educational disadvantages

and marginal mental retardation are not always apparent. One approach is to tell supervisors that they know their workers. If, in their judgment, telling workers that a student is educationally disadvantaged or mentally retarded would create a barrier or result in the student being treated "differently," it may be best to say nothing. If telling workers is likely to result in added efforts on their part to be helpful and friendly, it may be wise to share the fact that the student may learn a little more slowly.

Orientation will not anticipate all problems. It can provide supervisors with initial understanding while laying the groundwork for future meetings with the teacher/coordinator. Informal supervisor training must continue throughout the period of employment. The teacher/coordinator is expected to be prepared to provide this training in their meetings with supervisors. Some resources, for example, state agencies for the handicapped, can provide formal training for those supervisors who are willing and able to attend such a program.

Job Design

Job redesign is sometimes necessary to ensure success for special needs students. The process of reassigning and simplifying tasks is not new. Employers often rearrange the tasks to be performed by individual workers to deal with changes in the labor market (more or less skilled workers are available at a given wage) or in the work process (results of work simplification, new safety procedures) or in technology (word processing, robotics), etc. The difference here is that the redesign is desirable to permit a student to perform competently and learn from experience.

Whether redesigning a job to meet a student's needs or needs of the employing organization, it is important to remember that jobs are interdependent. Changing the content of a job to meet the needs of a student can have impact on the jobs to be performed by other workers. In some cases the way in which a task is to be performed may be changed rather than the job content. The need may be to change or modify equipment or work procedures.

A teacher/coordinator may not possess both knowledge of the specific tasks, skills and conditions involved and the necessary skill and experience in job redesign. The supervisor and others in the workplace must determine the tasks to be performed and skill requirements. While job redesign is a specialized professional skill, teacher/coordinators can develop adequate general skills to assist the work supervisor in most situations. In the event the teacher/coordinator does not have this skill or the problem is too difficult, it is desirable to obtain the assistance of a specialist. If there is no one in the employing company or in the school district, it may be possible to get help from one of the larger employers in the area or an agency which serves people with the specific handicap.

Job analysis identifies the tasks in each job and the knowledge, skills, abilities and judgment needed to perform each task. It is an important management tool which is equally important for increasing employment opportunities for special needs students. It is a means for assembling tasks into a job in which the student can be productive and learn.

Job analysis involves determining:

- what a worker does, i.e. each task performed;
- the knowledge, ability, skills and judgment needed and relationships with others involved to perform each task;
- the purpose of each task in terms of the service or product produced.

These data can help the teacher/coordinator determine whether a student can perform and benefit from a specific job, whether the student can be easily prepared to perform the job by a special in-school program, and whether the job needs to be and can be redesigned to be useful for both student and employer. These are important criteria for a good match between job requirements and competencies and potential of the special needs students.

Job analysis is helpful for identifying and removing unnecessary job requirements. The first step in job redesign is to identify the tasks and other job elements, e.g. equipment, which make the job inappropriate for the student. Job analysis not only provides this information, it frequently provides leads on how to deal with these problems, so as to produce a desirable job for the student. This is the second step.

The following is one procedure for redesigning a job to meet the needs and capabilities of a special needs student:

1. Determine the student's competencies, interests, potential, and career goals. (Refer to the Vocational Guidance section.) It does not pay to determine potential competency to perform specific tasks until the potential appropriate job placement is identified. After it is, competencies to perform specific tasks should be evaluated to select a job for which remediation, training, and redesign will be easiest.

2. If it seems that job redesign may be needed, get the employer's commitment to make a job analysis and possibly to redesign the job. Discuss the student's qualifications and the job requirements with the employer. Most often there is agreement that the student is competent to perform the job with some minor special effort on the part of the school and the employer. In these cases there is not need for job redesign. Approaches include special in-school remediation or skill training in advance of placement and developing a task sequence to introduce the student to progressively more demanding tasks. When the teacher/coordinators and the employer agree to job redesign, it is desirable to plan a job analysis. (Note: redesign may be useful not only for placing the special needs students, but

for new workers in general.) In no event should there be an attempt to change the entire work process. It may be necessary to provide technical assistanct to the employer.

3. The job analysis usually has four steps:

   a) Describe the job system. This is a description of the focal job and others related to it to indicate how changes in this job would affect other jobs.

   b) Identify the tasks (16) to be performed. This is a list of the tasks the worker is expected to perform and the relationship between these tasks and the tasks performed by other workers.

   c) Describe each task in detail. If possible, the tasks should be described in the sequence in which they are usually performed so that related tasks can be considered at the same time. The description should include:

      - Why the task is performed and the output;
      - What the worker does in each activity comprising the task and why;
      - Tools, equipment and materials required for each task and how they are used;

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(16) A task is a set of related activities used to produce an identifiable output which could be assignd to another worker for further work or results in a completed work product.

- The time required to perform each task and the frequency with which it is performed;

- The relationship of the task to the job as a whole, i.e. if the task were performed by another worker would it be desirable to remove other tasks as well;

- The relationship between this task and related tasks performed by other workers;

- Quality and quantity criteria for satisfactory performance of each task and for the job as a whole (both for a beginning and a fully trained and experienced worker).

d) Determine the knowledge, skill, ability, judgment and motivation required to perform the task satisfactorily. These five factors are interrelated; where the influence of one starts and another picks up is rarely clear. However, in general:

- Knowledge is the theory, principles, and other information needed to perform the task;

- Skill is the competence to employ knowledge in use of tools and equipment, following procedures, making analyses, and in all work, except interpersonal relations;

- Ability is the competence to employ knowledge effectively in interpersonal relationships;

- Judgment is the competence to make necessary decisions and to solve problems which may arise in the course of work;

- Motivation is the interest in performing the task and the will to perform it satisfactorily.

4. Match student's competencies with job requirements. The object of this exercise is to:

   a) Identify tasks that the student could perform with normal in-school instruction, on-the-job training and motivation;

   b) Identify tasks that are beyond the student's capabilities at entry, but which the student could perform if (1) given appropriate special on-the-job training, in-school education and motivation; and/or (2) appropriate changes are made in the work enviornment, equipment, procedures, etc. Determine what the school and employer are prepared to do to equip the student to perform the task satisfactorily.

   c) Identify tasks which would be beyond the student's capabilities during the work training and experience period.

5. Based on the analysis, the employer must decide whether to accept placement, and if the decision

is to accept, whether to reassign or eliminate tasks in "4c." The teacher/coordinator must decide whether the student's chances for early and continued interest and success with the restructured job are sufficiently high to warrant placing the student. The needs of both employer and student must be met within reasonable time limits and the resources which are available.

An area in which a teacher/coordinator can be of assistance for both the student and the employers is in the design of job aids. These may involve minor redesigns of the work process and some tasks. A job aid is a device or material which provides data, information or stimuli to inform the worker what to do, when to do it, and how to do it well. An effective aid reduces the time needed for detailed, formal training and close supervision by reducing reliance on recall. Checklists, forms, standard operating procedures, and step-by-step procedures are examples of job aids which are useful for improving the performance of most workers but which may be essential for special needs students.

There is considerable experience in changing working conditions to permit handicaped and other special needs workers perform at an acceptable level. Specialized voluntary organizations and governmental agencies devoted to the interests of handicaped people can provide information and assistance in efforts to modify working conditions. Some simple, easy to accomplish modifications are:

- rearranging files or shelves for accessibility to wheelchair occupants;
- widening access areas between fixtures to allow room for wheelchairs;

- placing braille labels on shelves so that blind employees can identify contents;
- raising or lowering equipment to provide comfortable working heights;
- moving equipment controls to one side or another or modifying them for hand or foot operation;
- installing special holding devices on desks, machines or benches;
- installing touch-tone telephones for those who cannot dial;
- provdiding an extension arm or gooseneck to hold a phone receiver.

Structuring the Work Experience

Many special needs students are uncomfortable making decisions which if wrong may indicate that they are incompetent, or have poor judgment. This may result from distrust of their ability to solve problems and perform in a manner satisfactory to adults or from distrust and insecurity in dealing with strangers or from uncertainty about what is expected from them. A retarded student can be immobilized if not given clearly understandable rules and guides for behavior. There must be explicit, consistent rules which provide the structure for behavior in the workplace. Students are also guided by non-verbal clues and the day-to-day behavior of the teacher/coordinator, the supervisor and other adults in the workplace who are accepted as role models. It is important that these convey consistent messages and that adult workers follow the rules set forth for the students or the students understand why there are different standards.

Some students come from environments with little structure. They need to learn how to function in a structured work enviornment. Their knowledge of what to expect in the workplace is based only on the in-school preparation for work. It is important that the rules set forth in school not be inconsistent with those of the workplace.

Some of the areas in which structure and specific rules are essential are:

- attendance and punctuality, both at school and work;
- safety;
- relationship with others, particularly supervisors;
- use of tools, equipment, and supplies;
- requesting and providing information;
- getting help.

In setting and requiring adherence to structure, the teacher/coordinator and supervisor must be careful not to undercut their close, personal relationships with the special needs student. The absence of close relationships with adults outside of the family in the student's past may have been the major barrier to learning.

Job aids such as checklists and standard operating procedures also provide structure and are very useful for these students. Structure at work tends to help the student overcome uncertainty, facilitate learning and acceptance by others and reduce the need for corrective action on the part of the supervisor.

The rules taught in the preparation for work cannot always faithfully mirror those at the work station. If there are significant differences between the rules taught in school and those at home or the workplace, students should be instructed separately to avoid misunderstanding and confusion.

There have been many studies and there is considerable experience in changing working conditions to permit handicapped and other special needs workers perform at an acceptable level. Specialized voluntary orgarizations and governmental agencies devoted to the interests of handicapped people can provide information and assistance.

Training Agreement and Training Plan

There should be a training agreement and a training plan for every student. The agreement and plan for special needs students should contain, in addition to the items in these for other students:

1. A description of the student's handicap and special needs to ensure success at the work place.

2. A description of what the school and the employer will each do to create workplace environment and conditions to enable the student to be a productive worker and learn on the job.

3. A statement of the support and other services the school will provide for the employer and the student to ensure success for both.

4. A schedule for teacher/coordinator visits.

Not only must the in-school curriculum be tailored to the capabilities of the student with special needs, very close ties must be maintained between the classroom curriculum and the requirements of the workplace. This is particularly the case for educationally disadvantaged students. These ties and the willingness of the school to modify its curriculum should be spelled out in the training agreement and the training plan.

It is suggested that "an umbrella construct of curriculum, making systematic use of employer-validated skills for specific employment may be a useful took in curriculum planning." (17) Further, it is recom-

(17) Technical Assistance Services: Illinois Special Needs Populations, Illinois State Board of Education, 1983.

mended that there be "more extensive use of short-term job specific, on-site training," (18) and that in-school curriculum be changed as new work requirements are identified. Where it is desirable to tighten the linkage between specific, narrow on-the-job skills and in-school education, the attempt should be made to mainstream basic curriculum elements while maintaining flexibility in the vocational curriculum to adapt to meeting specific student's needs and workplace requirements.

The following self-assessment instruments are modifications of those in the manual, "Self-Assessment Guidelines for Administrators of High School Cooperative Education Programs,"(19) to indicate the additions for special needs students.

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(18) Ibid.

(19) National Child Labor Committee, Room 1111 1501 Broadway, New York, New York 10036

Training Agreement for Special Needs Students

Definition: A document signed by the teacher/coordinator, employer, and student defining the responsibilities of each, nature of work to be performed, time and hours of employment, and rate of pay for the work.

Characteristics	Assessment
1. The training agreement specifies:	
a) the student's occupation	_____
b) duration of the training period	_____
c) hours of work -- maximum and minimum	_____
d) wages	_____
e) the nature of the student's special needs	_____
f) how the special needs will be satisfied by:	
(1) school	_____
(2) employer	_____
(3) other (attach description)	
g) support and benefits to be provided for employer such as funding, supervisory training, help in adapting the workplace, and tax benefits.	_____
h) visits to be made by the teacher/coordinators	_____
i) how the employers' participation will be recognized	_____
j) responsibilities of all parties involved	_____
k) other (attach description)	
2. The training agreement:	
a) is provided to each student	_____
b) is provided to all other involved parties	_____

Characteristics	Assessment
c) is signed by all parties	_____
d) includes a training plan	_____
e) is supplemented by a training plan	_____
f) is followed by:	
(1) teacher/coordinators	_____
(2) students	_____
(3) employers	_____
g) meets all state requirements	_____
h) is monitored regularly	_____
i) is evaluated and modified as needed	_____

Overall Assessment and Rationale

Remarks

Training Plan for Special Needs Students

Definition: The individual plan developed by the teacher/coordinator, employer and student which specifies the specific learning experiences to be provided on the job and in the classroom, and the progression and time-frames for each.

Characteristics	Assessment
1. The district requires:	
a) a written plan for every student	_____
b) a job description attached to each training plan	_____
c) a description of the needs which must be considered to ensure success	_____
d) the plan indicate how these needs will be met	_____
e) who is responsible to see that the necessary resources are obtained and the plan is implemented	_____
f) training plans be updated as needed to meet student and job requirements	_____
g) the employer, student, parent, and school officials receive copies of the training plan	_____
h) teacher/coordinators receive training in negotiating and preparing training plans	_____
i) district staff reviews samples of training plans from each teacher/ coordinator	_____
2. Training plans:	
a) are developed jointly by the employer, the teacher/coordinator, and others who are responsible for the education of special needs students	_____

Characteristics	Assessment
b) outline the sequence of tasks the student will perform	_____
c) contain time schedules for acquiring skills	_____
d) describe information and skills the student will learn on the job and in the calssroom	_____
e) indicate how the workplace will be modified to meet student's needs	_____
f) indicate whether there is need for job redesign and, if there is, who and how it will be done	_____
g) are monitored	_____
h) provide for periodic performance evaluations	_____
i) mesh related class curriculum with on-the-job learning	_____
j) are modified based on student's development in-school and on-the-job	_____
3. The training plan stipulates that the employer provide each student with a letter of recommendation describing the student's competence and readiness for full-time employment	_____

Overall Assessment and Rationale

Remarks

Support Services

Students with special needs generally require a broader range and a higher level of support services than other cooperative education students. There is a greater element of risk with these students. Support services are necessary to reduce the level of risk.

During the evaluation for selection, the teacher/coordinator must obtain information from the student, the counselor, the special education teacher, the parents and others to determine the nature and level of risk for each student, the nature, level and timing of support services each will need to succeed on the job, and the services which are being provided. Resources to provide the additional services should be identified and a tentative support plan developed prior to placement. Unless the support can be provided to reduce risk to an acceptable level, it would be counterproductive to student, employer, and program to enroll the student.

Support services, in addition to those offered to all cooperative education students frequently include:

- more intensive remedial education;
- special in-school vocational training;
- continuing psychological services;
- individual tutoring;
- transportation to and from work;
- closer relationships between teacher/coordinators and supervisors;
- more carefully designed task progression;
- individual job design;

- special equipment;
- flexibility in scheduling;
- provision of independent study materials;
- more frequent meetings between teacher/coordinators and vocational counselors and special education teachers;
- greater participation by parents;
- special preparation for work;
- special services for employers;
- tighter linkage between on-the-job needs and in-school education;
- special training for teacher/coordintors;
- additional teacher/coordinator time to provide assistance to students;
- paraprofessional aides to help students meet job and school requirements; and
- small classes.

Improving Learning at the Work Place

Students' gaining work competence and acceptable behavioral patterns and chance for obtaining employment upon graduation depend upon the quality of the experience at the work place.

Helping to structure the work experience to maximize student learning probably requires the highest levels of knowledge and skill on the part of the teacher/coordinator. Good work stations for students with special needs don't just exist, they have to be developed.

To reach this end, the teacher coordinator has to:

- Make an appropriate match between student and job, if necessary, provide the education and training to make the student job-ready, help the employer redesign the job to fit the capabilities of the student, and develop a workable training plan with the employer and student.

- Ensure that the supervisor is both willing and capable of providing the special supervision and on-the-job training that will help this student learn and become a competent, productive worker.

- Provide or make arrangements for related instruction which will mesh with and supplement on-the-job learning.

- Link on-the-job needs, activities, and learning with those of the in-school instruction.

- Coordinate, adjust, integrate, and harmonize all of these activities to achieve the desired objectives.

These objectives are related and consequently there has been and will be some overlap in the discussion. While the first three have been discussed in some detail and the others have been touched on here and there, we will consider all five as they relate to improving learning at the work place.

Accomplishing these not only calls for knowledge about the learning which is taking place, a rational analysis of each situation, determining what needs to be done and who should and can do what, and how to maintain control over activities, it calls for the teacher/coordinator to motivate the work supervisor and all the other people involved to undertake tasks, coordinate their activities and accept the teacher/coordinator as a skilled resource person and a consultant. For these tasks, the teacher/coordinator must be an accomplished change agent who can inspire others to want to change and provide guidance on how to change.

To gain the knowledge required, the teacher/coordinator must use many sources. The most important are first hand observation at the work place, reports from the supervisors, the students and other school faculty involved, and interviews with all of these Types of informaiton needed include:

- effectiveness of coordination,
- compliance with the training agreement,
- achievement of objectives of the training plan,
- the competencies gained by each student,

- the nature of work place behaviors,
- the kind of supervision and training provided,
- the degree to which in-school learning is used on the job,
- how work experience illuminates and indicates the importance of in-school education,
- barriers to learning on the job,
- changes which are desirable or necessary,
- students' views of themselves and their confidence in their abilities.

Visits to the work station are important for obtaining needed information, providing support, and taking the action. While teacher/coordinators believe that a monthly visit is adequate for most students, there are very few who believe that visits for students with special needs should be less frequent than biweekly. Frequent meetings can strain relationships with the supervisor. Consequently, they must be planned, useful for student and supervisor, and short.

Visits should be scheduled to avoid interfering with the flow of work and productivity and to ensure that the supervisor will be available and ready to discuss the student's progress. The employer and supervisor can come to see these visits as valuable to them as well as the student if efforts are made to improve productivity as well as learning; to provide advice and assistance which is applicable for other workers in addition to the student; to accept and use advice on how to change vocational education; and to ensure employer's satisfaction in participating.

The findings and conclusions reached should be discussed with all the people who will be affected, to confirm findings, to test conclusions and to gain support for any changes to be made.

There is too little information available on how to accomplish this objective for students with special needs. This makes it more important to act deliberately and keep records on what is done, under what circumstances, what the results were, and the hypothesis of the cause/effect relationship.

Often the road to improving learning at the work place is through focusing related instruction. Consequently, there must be a continuous, two-way flow of information between classroom and work place. Teachers are more apt to have the knowledge and skills for training students with special needs than work place supervisors. Keeping the classroom teacher informed of the disparity between task requirements and the student's capabilities makes it possible for the teacher to focus in-class instruction to increase capabilities if the student is not up to the job or to suggest additional tasks if the job is not challenging the student. The classroom teacher can also change the sequence of instruction to fit the sequence in which tasks will be assigned on the job and suggest job aids to improve performance and how to sequence job tasks to facilitate learning.

On the basis of both life experience and learning theory, the students, although a varied population with different disabilities, tend to gain more from integrated school and work education than other students; they tend to have greater need for experience in concrete operations before moving on to more general and abstract symbolic processes.

Developing the work station into both a production and learning station and linking this closely with the related class instruction are probably the areas in which there is the sharpest difference between effective and ineffective teacher/coordinators for programs involving students with special needs.

Employment After Graduation

Helping special needs students doesn't end with making an appropriate work placement or linking in-school and on-the-job development or even with ensuring that the employer can and does provide the student with "documented employability." Help must continue to assist students obtain appropriate employment after graduation. While this is an educational objective for all students who want to enter the labor market, it is of greatest importance for students with special needs who face discrimination and distrust in seeking employment; educators who have worked with these young people and have the best knowledge of their capabilities are in the best position to help.

The planning and activities to achieve this crucial objective must begin very early. One might say even before students are admitted into the program. At the latest, planning for employment must start when students are admitted. The job placements and supplementary education must be made with ultimate employment a major criteron.

Planning to place every special needs student participating in cooperative education who will enter the labor market upon graduation should include:

a. obtaining information and assistance from special education teachers and counselors to identify resources, barriers and opportunities for employment for special needs students, jointly developing plans to succeed and assigning tasks and responsibilities to maximize utilization of school-based resources;

b. identifying government and private sector organizations which

can provide funds and other resources and assistance in the effort to place students after graduation (what these organizations will provide for whom), and developing linkages with those willing to provide significant help;

c. obtaining labor market information relative to industries, companies, and occupations which provide opportunities for special needs students, making contacts in the state employment service and department of labor, knowledgeable people in the industries and occupations and in service organizations to obtain information. Estimating the labor market opportunities at the time the students will graduate;

d. discussing with appropriate individuals in companies the possibilities for employment after graduation, in addition to cooperative work experience placement. (While it is not wise to pressure an employer who is willing to participate in cooperative education for full-time post-graduation employment, some employers may be willing to consider employment.) This has additional advantages including: more realistic training, assignment and performance evaluation for the student. Sometimes employers who are not willing to participate in cooperative education are willing to provide employment

for a student who has a good cooperative education record.

e. obtaining and analyzing information relating to each student's disability, competencies and potential with respect to full-time employment. This information is essential for making a cooperative education placement which will provide the experience and recommendation needed to get a full-time job.

f. preparing the students prior to placement to expect to succeed on the job. This is an essential element. Telling special needs students that there are job opportunities and describing them is usually not enough to overcome fear of failure and deep rooted feelings of doubt. There is no certain way to do this. One way is to introduce them to role models and success stories of similarly disadvantaged students.

g. analyzing the school's program to obtain post-graduation employment for students who will enter the labor market to determine how special needs students can fit into the program to their advantage. Some special efforts can be made at the "job fairs" many schools hold for their graduating students.

h. developing an integrated career development and employment plan

for each student with the following elements:

- learning objectives;
- activities to achieve learning objectives;
- in-school and on-the-job integration;
- placing student to ensure success on the job and post-graduation employment;
- monitoring and assisting the employer to ensure student's success in cooperative work experience;
- maximizing school efforts to obtain appropriate employment;
- getting others into the act to increase employment opportunities.

i. providing assistance to those who do not obtain immediate employment by continuing school-based efforts, arranging for further education and training and helping the graduate establish contacts with other organizations willing to help. Some of these are:

- state vocational rehabilitation agencies;
- state employment services;
- private, non-profit rehabilitation, guidance and training facilities;
- Private Industry Councils;
- organizations that service people with a specific disability;

- community-based organizations;
- recreational associations;
- sheltered workshops;
- churches; and
- special schools.

State vocational rehabilitation services frequently not only provide assistance for special needs students but also for their employers. These generally include some training and orientation for supervisors, assistance with getting credit for complying with afirmative action regulations, accessibility assistance, modifying the work site and equipment and financial incentives.

Recognition for Supporters

It is essential to give public recognition for the efforts of employers and others who cooperate and help to make cooperative work experience successful learning for students with special needs. This should be seen not only as a deserved public thanks and tribute to concerned and actively supportive people, but also as a means to strengthen the will of the people involved to continue to participate and to provide publicity for the program to motivate others to participate. It should be an integral part of the effort to involve and gain support from the entire community. It should include recognition for students' performance as well. Focusing on 'success stories' represented by real, identified students, employers and volunteers has more positive impact than any amount of generalized publicity.

This recognition should be integrated with the recognition activities for cooperative work experience as a whole. However, within these activities, there should be specific recognition for this select group.

It is possible to go beyond the school programs to hook into the recognition activities of agencies devoted to helping physically and mentally handicapped people. These agencies are usually most receptive to such a move.

Whatever the recognition activities are, informational and human interest articles and press releases should be prepared and distributed to newspapers, radio and television stations. Arrangements should be made for interviews.

In addition to recognizing a few outstanding supporters, it is desirable to acknowledge every person who contributes. The employer luncheons and dinners provide one avenue. Others are letters of appreciation from the student, teacher/coordinator, or principal, certificates for each year of participation, inclusion of names in the annual report, and minor

gifts such as paperweights with a statement recognizing the nature of the support provided.

Whatever form or method for recognition is decided upon, the students should be involved in the planning and implementation. Where the program is integrated with that for other cooperative education students, it is a responsibility of the teacher/coordinator to see that students with special needs get involved and are not pushed aside and ignored.

Follow Up Evaluation (20)

Efforts to achieve the difficult objective of one hundred percent employment for special needs students can not succeed without making use of every bit of reliable, valid information obtainable. A prime source for such information is our own experience. Which students obtained employment, where, doing what. And, to the extent that these are determinable, why did students succeed or fail, how are the results related to the educational and support programs, and what should be done to increase chances for success in the next class.

As with so many other activities labeled "special" for special needs students, follow-up evaluation is desirable not only for this population but also for the entire student population. However, it is more important for the special population; because the problems are more difficult and we have fewer answers. If there are few resources for follow-up, they would be best spent for improving the chances for the special needs population.

The primary purpose of evaluation is to obtain information which will help to improve programs to achieve major goals. However, it is usually desirable to have less global objectives which depend on relatively few variables and can lead to improving specific key elements. Useful evaluation starts with a statement of the information desired, how the information would be

(20) For more detail on this element as it applies to all Cooperative Education Students, see the same key element in the NCLC publication "Keys to Cooperative Education." Also "Conducting High School Follow-Up Studies" N.J. Department of Education, Trenton, NJ 1983

used, and why this would help improve program design or implementaiton. Determining the degree to which annual objectives have been achieved is a frequent starting point. But it is only a starting point. The important answers are answers to the question "why" rather than "what."

Another possible starting point is to conduct a self-assessment of the design and implementation of the elements of the cooperative education program.(21)

Focusing on the ultimate goal of employment of every student with special needs who does not go on to higher education calls for comparing the employment experiences of sub-populations of these students(22)with each other and two other comparable groups:

- Students with special needs who did not participate in cooperative education, and
- Students without special needs who did participate.

Further comparisons can be made by industry, occupation, etc. These finer breakdowns can help identify employment experiences. In each comparison there should be descriptions of the

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(21)The National Child Labor Committee publication "Self-Assessment Guidelines for Administrators of High School Cooperative Work Experience Programs," contains instruments to obtain this type of information. Each key element description in "Keys to Coopeative Education" includes self assessment questions.

(22)Physically handicapped, mentally retarded, etc.

variables which are the same, e.g. labor market conditions and those which are different, e.g. special job design.

It would not be cost beneficial to attempt to design and conduct a controlled experiment. Data should be collected for all students and special need students and identifiable sub-populations who expect to enter the labor market. Analysis should provide estimates whether cooperative education made a difference, and why it did or did not. The "why" leads us to consider the "givens" in the situation variables not under control of the teacher/coordinator, e.g. the labor market and students' characteristics, and variables which can be, more or less, influenced by the educational system--what we have called "key elements."

Texts on research and evaluation emphasize the necessity of obtaining reliable and valid data if findings are to have any degree of statistical value. However, on one hand, much of the information which is obtainable at an affordable cost is subjective and relatively soft or incomplete or otherwise of doubtful reliability. On the other hand, much of the data which satisfy research requirements and which can be obtained may be of little value for improving the program.

Consequently, it is necessary to get the best information we can with the available resources instead of waiting for perfectly reliable and valid data. And, in our use of the findings, factor in our knowledge of the doubtful reliability and validity.

The important thing is to actively seek to learn from experience, to rationally seek to improve, using the learning, and to keep accurate records so that both we and those who come after us have a useful data bank.

Examples From Active Programs

This section consists of a number of examples of approaches and material used in cooperative education programs which may be of use in the design and implementation of programs for students with special needs. In some cases we have adapted or otherwise changed the information we obtained from our sources. In other cases we have melded the materials obtained from two or more sources. Consequently, it has not been always possible to identify a single source and where a single source has been identified, there may have been changes made by us.

Example 1: Some jurisdictions separate disadvantaged and handicapped students into three categories for placement purposes. This tends to simplify and organize planning for students.

In the first category are students who can be "mainstreamed" either with or without intensive pre-placement counseling and remedial education.

The second category includes students who require, in addition to pre-placement counseling, remedial education and special support services, some limited special effort on the part of the employer and some school assistance for the employer. These placements may call for moderate job redesign or special sequencing of assigned tasks or minor modification of the work place or arranging for transportation.

Students in the third category require continuing remediation, individual training, intensive support services and counseling, special placement, close on-the-job support and school/job coordination, and special services, supports, and incentives for employers. The number of students assigned to a teacher/coordinator must be reduced and coordination between teacher/coordinator and counselors, special education teachers and outside agencies is usually essential.

Example 2: One state provides its local educational agencies (LEAs) with an operational definition of "educationally disadvantaged" to achieve a degree of uniformity in recruiting and placing students and developing support services. The following is the definition:

> Students to be in the program are, or will be, identified as educationally disadvantaged according to criteria outlined below:
>
> a) Poor achievement grades (previous year);(23)
> b) Two years below grade level in reading;
> c) Poor attendance record (previous year);(24)
> d) Two grades below proper grade for age;
> e) Poor ability to use English language; and
> f) Other evidence of failure or factors that prevent pupils from succeeding in regular vocational programs.

Example 3: Many jurisdictions require that teacher/coordinators have special training, knowledge and competencies to work with special needs students. The following is a composite of checklists used by several jurisdictions to identify training needs:

> a) Knowledge of factors which affect the performance of different categories of special needs students and their ability to learn from work experience.

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(23)Failure or near failing ("F" or "D")

(24)Unexcused absences or tardiness

b) Competence to use this knowledge in counseling, motivating, placing, and providing support services for students.

c) Ability to influence and train supervisors to supervise students effectively.

d) Knowledge and use of methods of communicating with students and supervisors.

e) Knowledge of community resources for special needs students and ability to obtain and use these resources effectively.

f) Knowledge of responsibilities and activities of faculty and other school personnel relating to special needs students.

g) Ability to identify and obtain appropriate work stations.

h) Competence to match students with work stations.

i) Ability to serve as a consultant to employers in job redesign, supervisory training, etc.

j) Knowledge of the labor market for employment opportunities appropriate for special needs cooperative education graduates.

k) Knowledge of laws to encourage employment of handicapped persons.

Example 4: The following are some guidelines for supervisors of mentally retarded workers:

a. Introduce responsibilities gradually. Don't overwhelm young workers with too much at one time. This is a valid rule for supervising any worker, but it is particularly important when dealing with employees who are slow to comprehend and do not have confidence in their abilities. Be patient, allow extra time for training and be prepared to repeat instructions until the worker can perform the task.

b. Be as specific as possible at all times. Reduce uncertainty for the workers. If you want the worker to put supplies away at the end of the day, show the worker where the supply closet is instead of using only verbal instructions. Show the worker where the rest rooms, lockers, and lunchrooms are located. In addition to telling a mentally retarded worker that payroll checks are picked up on the third floor, take the worker there personally. If you can not be available, assign a "buddy" to explain, demonstrate and orient the worker.

   A young, mentally retarded worker may need to be told several times what clothes to wear on the job, what the working hours are, where to clock-in, to whom to report, what the pay will be after deductions, and other specific information.

c. Combine a sympathetic approach with firm standards. Try to understand the difficulties encountered by a retarded youngster entering the world of work. Slow-learning young people may find the adjustment difficult to handle. However, excessive leniency is undesirable. A young, mentally retarded worker needs to know what the supervisor expects, and ultimately, how to meet the standards expected from all workers.

d. Mentally retarded people can learn to perform complex, routine tasks well. The key word is "routine." It is the unexpected and unpredictable that present problems. Mentally retarded workers frequently perform routine tasks in a superior manner.

e. Provide regular evaluations and feedback. All workers need to know how well they are doing. Young, mentally retarded workers have a special need. Since they are usually new to the working world, they cannot compare their present performance with previous experience. In addition, they may feel that asking questions about their work indicats that they are "dumb," a label that mentally retarded people want to avoid at all costs. Regularly scheduled performance evaluations are helpful. If a young, mentally retarded worker does something incorrectly, show him or her how to do it properly. Focus on "doing it right" rather than on explaining why it was

wrong. The more you can demonstrate what you want, the more effective feedback will be.

f. Don't talk down to young, mentally retarded workers. It's difficult to keep your language simple without treating slow learning people as if they were small children. But, it can be done. Practice a simple style of speech without condescension. Above all, be precise.

g. Don't let generalizations about mental retardation blur, in your mind or in those of other workers, the uniqueness of each young worker. All people, whatever their limitations, have distinct personalities. Your young, mentally retarded employee is an individual first and a handicapped person second. Their feelings, needs and reactions are no more uniform than those of other people. Learn each worker's individual characteristics so that you will be able to supervise better and make the student more productive.

h. In some instances the personality characteristics of retarded youths will reflect environmental factors that have little or nothing to do with intellectual endowment. For example, retarded people tend to persevere in tasks longer than non-retarded people. This was once attributed to inherent cognitive rigidity. Recent studies indicate that this perseverance is not due to cognitive rigidity,

but is primarily a function of motivation.

i. Three points to remember are that these are young workers, that they have the ability to perform at a satisfactory level, and that they need to know what is expected of them in the workplace.

Example 5: Information for Supervisors. Teacher/Coordinators should be able to provide some information about mental retardations for supervisors. The kind of information is indicated below. Greater detail should be obtained from guidance counselors and others who have been trained to work with these students.

"Mental retardation" is classified as a "developmental disability." Other conditions in this classification are: autism, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, and neurological impairmant. Disability alone is defined as "a limitation in the kind or amount of work that a person can perform, resulting from a chronic condition lasting six months or longer." "Developmental disability," then, is based on a medical diagnosis. "Disability" is based on a measure of the ability to work.

Mental retardation is defined as a deficit:

a. in intellectual development and social adaptation;

b. which originated at birth or during early childhood;

c. which is generally seen and treated as a learning disability;

d. which is an irreversible condition that may be improved but

not "cured" in light of present knowledge; and

e. which constitutes subtantial handicap to the individual.

Mental retardation refers to subnormal intellectual functioning. It is diagnosed on the basis of scores on an intelligence test (IQ). Youths who are mentally retarded are usually not mentally ill or emotionally disturbed. However, they are subject to psychological stress and can develop emotional and behaviorial problems.

Example 6 (on the following page): The following are some criteria used by the Pittsburgh Public Schools to identify "special needs" students.

IN SCHOOL

_____ shows little or no interest in school.
*_____ is often absent (approximately nine days per report period).
_____ may be academically "retarded."
*_____ poor grades (below "C" average).
_____ may be over age for grade level (such as being 18 and in the 10th grade).
_____ hasn't adapted to, or been served by, mainstream educational programs.
_____ has experienced very limited, if any, academic or personal success.
*_____ rebels against authoritative figures.
*_____ may be ready to drop out of school.
_____ didn't select existing work/study vocational programs.
_____ has been nonresponsive to traditional methods in education.
_____ has short attention span.
_____ does not have "competencies" developed in vocational skill-centered cources.

OUT OF SCHOOL

*_____ known to Juvenile Court.
_____ has had difficulty with the law.
_____ lives in an economically depressed neighborhood.
_____ may have a maternally-dominated family (problems in idenitfying with a male figure).
_____ often lives with a grandparent or older siblings.
_____ lacks family influence and assistance to provide direction toward most aspects of achievement.
_____ has limited finances and material possessions.
_____ has a child.

IN GENERAL

_____ feels powerless to correct the situation.
_____ does not feel accepted as a person
*_____ displays mistrust, hostility, poor basic academic skills, emotional problems, some degree of negativism and/or physical problems.
_____ withdrawal from overly demanding situations.
_____ relies on short-range goals based on immediate rewards, not allowing for planned resolution of problems.
_____ family and personal problems affect his/her ability to achieve.
_____ may rely on alcohol and/or drugs.
_____ problems with interpersonal relationships.
_____ limited English-speaking ability.

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*Indicates major cirteria for selection

I consider _____ a "Special Need Student" from the information I have obtained, and have initialed the applicable conditions.

PLEASE NOTE -- THIS INFORMATION IS CONFIDENTIAL

_____
Field Service Agent

Example 7: Collaboration.[25]

> Collaboration among special educators, vocational educators, school administrators, relevant community agencies and others is essential in accessing JTPA funds. The objective of the collaborative effort is to help handicapped students receive job training and employment services through the JTPA. A national study of ten exemplary secondary schools which utilized multiple funding sources and coordinated efforts among special and vocational education and vocational rehabilitation was made by Ashby and Bensberg (1982).(26) The following activities were found to be common in successful implementation of interagency agreements.
>
> "1. A broadly based, interdisciplinary team from participating agencies was established.

(25) Ashby, S. and Bensberg, G. L. Cooperative Occupational Prepartion of the Handicapped. In Tindall, L. W., Gugerty, J. and Others. Vocational Education Models for Linking Agencies Serving the Handicapped: Handbook on Developing Effective Linking Strategies. Madison, Wisconsin, University of Wisconsin--Madison, Vocational Studies Center, p. 199. January, 1982.

(26) Reported in "Partnerships in Business and Education," The Vocational Studies Center, University of Wisconsin--Madison.

2. Team members from participating agencies agreed upon a plan of action.

3. The identification of the handicaped students was initiated immediately.

4. Team members spent considerable time in developing community relations and the education of the community concerning the interagency approach.

5. Each agency did its task to keep students moving through the program. Several individuals cooperated to coordinate the flow of handicapped students through the program. Someone was assigned to follow each student through the program.

6. There was a continuous sharing of information.

7. A multidisciplinary approach was used in making decisions.

8. School-based teams coordinated closely with administrators."

ILLUSTRATIVE PROGRAM FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Project Work/Ability - California

This program is a coordinated effort at the state and local levels by the education, rehabilitation and employment development agencies for students with special needs. Funding is by the state and local education agencies with some support from the Job Training Partnership Act and services from the other state and local agencies.

In the 1983 - 84 school year, 229 schools in 20 Local Educational Agencies participated. The number in each Local Education Agency ranged from 19 to 236 students, and averaged 56 students. Program characteristics (rated in order of importance by the State Department of Education) include: strong support and participation by education personnel, involving the community, recruiting employers, developing and maintaining interagency agreements, involving parents actively, and establishing working advisory committees.

While focused on work experience to prepare these students for transition to employment, the program actually is closer to cooperative education than many programs which go under this label. Work/Ability includes developing jobs, placing students according to their interests and abilities, providing follow-up services to students and employers, and aiding in the transition to employment upon graduation. The follow-up services include maintaining contact with students and employers through site visits and telephone calls, progress reports and evaluations to educational staff, arranging for remedial and special vocational training, counseling students, and consultation with employers.

Separate assessments of the program by the State Department of Education (SDE), the State Employment Development Department (EDD), and the Auditor General of California found the program to be successful. Factors which influenced the success of the work experience component were found to be:

- Changing curriculums to coordinate vocational education with work experience.
- Making more effective use of resources and reducing duplication of activities among local and state agencies.
- Assessing students' interests, abilities, aptitudes and work readiness.
- Matching students to appropriate work experience jobs by using assessment results.
- Making jobs accessible to students by considering work hours, developing jobs close to schools or homes, and by resolving transportation problems.
- Involving employers willing to make accomodations for students. Employers often had to exercise patience, repeat instructions, and break jobs into smaller tasks.
- Gaining employer commitment by providing subsidies for the work experience, completing necessary paperwork, and paying for workers' compensation.
- Making certain that all involved parties understand each agency's objectives, services, and limitations.
- Planning jointly to define roles and responsibilities to foster commitment to the project's objectives.
- Starting participation in early high school years for students with the greatest employability needs.
- Monitoring work sites to solve work related problems.

The responsibilites accepted by the participating state and local agencies are:

1. State Department of Education (SDE) - Vocational and Continuing Education Division agreed to the following responsibilites:

   - Establish a statewide project office (Overall project management and overseeing individual projects)
   - Identify problem areas and develop corrective actions as necessary
   - Assess individual projects with state employment and state rehabilitation staff
   - Provide technical assistance to local schools
   - Provide liaison activities with other states and local participating agencies
   - Conduct project director meetings
   - Act as project monitor
   - Tabulate and program student information forms for two-year longitudinal study of Work/ Ability students
   - Work with the State Job Training Coordinating Council to develop PIC support for local Work/ Ability projects

2. State Department of Rehabilitation (SDR) agrees to the following responsibilities:

   - Designate appropriate staff as liaison to project
   - Provide technical assistance to local Department of Rehabilitation staffs
   - Arrange for appropriate training of project staff

- o Assure that local Department of Rehabilitation staff provide appropriate services to project participants

- o Assist in project monitoring through computerized client tracking system

- o Assist in problem identification and development of corrective actions as necessary

- o Participate in liasion activities with other state and local agencies

- o Investigate cooperative program model as a means to continue Work/Ability in a select number of sites

3. State Employment Development Department (EDD) agrees to the following responsibilities:

   - o Designate appropriate staff as liaison to project

   - o Provide technical assistance to local employment offices in implementing local projects

   - o Process student information forms for Work/Ability in FY 1984 for SDE to complete the two-year longitudinal study of Work/Ability

   - o Participate in liaison activities with other state and local participating agencies

   - o Participate in project director meetings

   - o Encourage Service Delivery Areas under JTPA to favorably consider support for Work/Ability projects

   - o Disseminate Work/Ability information to local employment offices

4. Local Education Agency (LEA)

- o Provide project management at local level
- o Identify and select project participants
- o Develop Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) in concert with Employment Development Department and/or Department of Rehabilitation staff
- o Develop assessment procedures with rehabilitation and/or employment staff to reduce duplication of testing students
- o Explore resources from other community sources
- o Provide classroom training, counseling and related services
- o Develop work experience slots with assistance from other agencies
- o Monitor work experience placements
- o Maintain project student information
- o Assist in job development and job placement
- o Inform community of project and activities
- o Conduct longitudinal follow-up to determine present employment or training status of graduates
- o Work with PIC representatives to develop support for local projects

5. Local Department of Rehabilitation (DR) Office

- o Identify potential participants with local education agencies
- o Determine eligibility for Rehabilitation services through assessment information available from local education agencies

- Assist in developing the Individualized Education Programs
- Develop Individualized Written Rehabilitation Programs for eligible participants
- Provide case services (supportive services)
- Provide vocational counseling in concert with local school personnel
- Provide training to local schools (Job clubs, SSI Self Support Plans)
- Assist in monitoring of work experience placements/sites
- Assist with placement into unsubsidized employment upon completion of training
- Provide sixty-day follow-up to ensure that employment is suitable for student participants who are rehabilitation clients
- Maintain liaison activities with other state and local participating agencies
- Work with PIC representatives to develop support for local projects

6. Local Employment Development Department (EDD) Office

- Assist in screening of potential project participants
- Provide labor market information to local schools to assist them in developing Individualized Education Programs
- Assist in developing work experience sites and selecting youth for placement into work experience
- Provide Targeted Jobs Tax Credit information, and voucher eligible participants

- Provide training to local schools, e.g., Job Search Training Workshops and Windmills

- Provide intensive (extraordinary) job development and placement services for youth involved in Work/Ability

- Maintain liaison with other state and local participating agencies

- Assist local education and rehabilitatiion staff to obtain support for Work/Ability from Private Industry Council under JPTA when proposals impact EDD

Hints:

The following were picked up in our discussions with educators and others involved in cooperative education and the employment of young people and in our review of our literature. They are not major suggestions but rather ideas, concepts, experiences which may lead you to something useful.

1. When the job description is prepared, don't assume which tasks will be easy or difficult for a handicapped or disadvantaged student to do. Spell the tasks out in detail. Be precise about the types and frequency of activities involved. If in doubt, discuss the appropriatness of the assignment with the special education teacher and the student. In some cases obtain information from knowledgeable outside indivicuals and agencies.

2. More information about handicapped and disadvantaged students is needed than about other students to be successful in placement. Learn about the type of disability or problem, potential mobility, work site requirements, special equipment or aids needed, etc.

3. Have the work supervisor break down the jobs into tasks and indicate the knowledge, skill and ability needed to perform each task. Get details on the physical activities involved. The more the supervisor is involved in the process the better.

4. Don't assume the student can or can't do something. Ask the student about the competence to perform each task, about special conditions one should be aware of, etc. Be direct. Don't let the wheelchair, the cane, or the hearing aid get in the way. Don't be overprotective or afraid of hurting a disabled student's feelings. The best way to get needed information is to ask.

5. As more is learned about an individual youth's capabilities, the teacher/coordinator and supervisors should work together to revise the job to provide maximum performance and learning.

6. Wheelchairs can be a problem if the work site has narrow doors and halls. The minimum width of a doorway to ensure that all wheelchairs will get through is 32 inches.

7. Most disabled students do not require major changes in the work place. Sometimes a few minor changes can make a big difference. For example, a rubber-tipped pencil will enable a student with restricted use of fingers to turn pages more easily. A pushbutton phone is more convenient for a person who has difficulty dialing. There are shoulder supports for people who cannot hold a phone receiver too long.

   If a desk is too low for a student in a wheelchair to be able to pull up close to it, place two-by-four wooden blocks under the legs of the desk, this will lift it up to a workable height.

   Relocate files used frequently from the top drawers of the file cabinet to the lower drawers. A student in a wheelchair sitting alongside a lower file drawer can reach the full length of the drawer.

   Speak to special education teachers and people at the organization for the specific disability to get other tips of this type.

8. There are usually more summer jobs than year-round jobs for young people. By placing and testing the competence of special needs students in summer jobs, cooperative education placements can be more precise and the students can demonstrate that they are productive, reliable workers. In many cases it is possible to incorporate a summer project or job into the cooperative program and continue the student's employment during the school year.

9. Use business organizations in the community to identify and recruit employers. The president of the Chamber of Commerce or Rotary can give the program credibility if he or she helps contact employers.

10. Recruit and use volunteers to provide remedial and special education, assist in recruiting employers, provide special support for students, etc.

11. Large companies unable to employ disadvantaged students may be willing to allow their staff members time off to help or provide money and other resources. Support from big business may enable a small business or a non-profit agency to hire special needs students.

12. Business councils, such as the American Council of Life Insurance, can influence member companies to help in job identification and placement. The Center for Corporate Public Involvement has been a leader in this effort.

13. Get the media to report human interest stories, reports, etc. of successful employment of disadvantaged students, giving the employers full credit.

14. Involve local labor unions. It may be easier to get unions involved in cooperative education for students with special needs than for students who are in the mainstream.

15. Work closely with the students' parents both to reinforce learning and to identify and recruit employers. The "Bridge" model has been used successfully to build parent education teams. A manual describing the approach has been developed and is available from the Parent's Campaign for Handicapped Children and Youth, 1201 16th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036.

16. Special needs students may benefit more from cooperative work experience placement in the 11th and earlier years than in the 12th year; many have dropped out or given up hope of working by the 12th year.

17. Improved cooperation between secondary and post-secondary schools is needed to accomodate special needs cooperative work experience students who may go on to higher education. This may require changing the secondary school's curriculum to achieve better articulation with that of the post-secondary school.

18. Jobs in fast food restaurants should not be discounted for special needs students. Working in a fast food restaurant can help young people acquire the good work habits necessary for success in any job, according to a research report from the National Institute for Work and Learning.(27) However, while this can be, and apparently frequently is, a positive experience, it should be placed within the context of career and vocational education plans.

19. Corporations participating in Projects With Industry (PWI) are a good source for job placements. PWI is a national network of companies, labor unions, and other organizations devoted to increasing employment opportunities for disabled persons. Additional information may be obtained from the Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration.

20. Document experiences with employers, students, outside resources, et al. There should be a card file for each category with information, such as name, dates and nature of participation, address, and telephone number, etc.

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(27)"Vocational Training News," 6/7/84.

Outside Resources

Teacher/coordinators cannot achieve the objectives of cooperative education work programs for special needs students if they depend solely on their own efforts, employing only the resources made available to them by the educational system. It is essential that teacher/coordinators be able to identify and make effective use of resources which can be tapped in the educational system, other public agencies, non-profit and private sector organizations in the community, and in regional and national organizations.

Good working relations should be established with individuals and organizations which can help achieve objectives. This can be an important role for the Advisory Committee. Beyond providing useful resources, involving others can increase support for employing students with special needs and for cooperative education generally.

In the educational system information and support services can be proviced by administrators, guidance counselors, health personnel, special education teachers, attendance officers, social workers and psychologists. Every state department of education has a division responsible for vocational rehabilitation. The services which these divisions provide include: medical, psychological and vocational evaluation; physical restoration; theraputic services; prosthetic devices; special tools and equipment; counseling; technical advice; transportation, and job placement information.

Other public agencies which can help include:

- state employment services
- state committee on employment of the handicapped
- state vocational rehabilitation services

- Private Industry Council.

Non-profit and private sector organizations which either are prepared to provide information, resources or direct assistance or can be recruited to help include local chapters of agencies serving the physically and mentally handicapped, professional organizations in education, training, and social work, and business organizations such as Rotary. Church groups, community based organizations, and individual companies can and are frequently willing to provide volunteers and some resources for support services such as transportation and tutoring.

National educational organizations include:

- American Industrial Arts Association
  1914 Association Drive
  Reston, VA 22091

- Americal Vocational Association
  2020 North 14th Street
  Arlington, VA 22201

- The Educational Resources Information Clearinghouse on Handicapped and Gifted
  Council for Exceptional Children
  1920 Association Drive
  Reston, VA 22901

- National Association for Gifted Children
  217 Gregory Drive
  Hot Springs, AK 71901

- National Center for Educational Media and Materials for the Handicapped (NCEMMH)
  The Ohio State University
  Faculty for Exceptional Children
  1945 North High Street
  Columbus, OH 43210

- National Center for Research in Vocational Education
  The Ohio State University
  1960 Kenny Road
  Columbus, OH 43210

- National Instructional Center for Special Education Materials (NICSEM)
  University of Southern California
  University Park
  Los Angeles, CA 90007

Regional Area Learning Resource Centers provide assistance in identification, evaluation, selection and development of special needs materials. In many states there is a special education consultant who can help obtain special assistance from the Regional Area Learning Resource Centers.

The following is a list of these Regional Centers:

- Southeast ALRC
  Auburn University at Montogmery
  Highway 80 East
  Montgomery, AL 36117
  (205) 279-9110 Ext. 258

- California LRC
  600 South Commonwealth Avenue
  Suite 1304
  Los Angeles, CA 90005

- ALRC Number 7
  Materials Development and Dissemination
  Specialized Educational Services
  Illinois Office of Education
  100 North First Street
  Springfield, IL 62777
  (217) 782-2436

- Midwest ALRC
  Drake University
  1336 26th Street
  Des Moines, IA 50311
  (515) 271-3951

- Mid-East ALRC
  University of Kentucky
  123 Porter Building
  Lexington, KY 40506
  (606) 258-4921

- Great Lakes ALRC
  Michigan Department of Education
  PO Box 30008
  Lansing, MI 48909
  (517) 373-9433

- Northeast ALRC
  168 Bank Street
  Hightown, NJ 08520
  (609) 448-4775

- Southwest ALRC
  New Mexico State University
  Las Cruces, NM 88003

- New York State ALRC
  55 Elk Street
  Room 117
  Albany, NY 12234
  (518) 474-2251

- Ohio ALRC
  933 High Street
  Worthington, OH 43085
  (614) 466-2650

- Northwest ALRC
  University of Oregon
  Clinical Services Building
  Third Floor
  Eugene, OR 97403
  (503) 686-3591

- Pennsylvania ALRC
  573 North Main Street
  Doylestown, PA 18901
  (215) 345-8080

- Texas ALRC
  The University of Texas at Austin
  College of Education Building
  1912 Speedway
  Austin, TX 78712
  (512) 471-3145

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In addition, there are Special Education Regional Centers. These can provide assistance in methods to identify and evaluate handicapped students, educational programs and placement. The following are the centers:

- RRC West
  3325 Wilshire Blvd
  Room 1345
  Los Angeles, CA 90010

- Mid-Atlantic RRC
  George Washington University
  1901 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
  Washington, DC 20006

- South Atlantic RRC
  Florida Atlantic Univeristy
  1230 North University Drive
  Plantation, FL 33322

- Mid-West RRC
  Drake University
  1332 26th Street
  Des Moines, Iowa 50311

- Mid-South RRC/Univeristy of Kentucky
  Research Foundaiton
  Porter Building, Room 131
  Lexington, KY 40506

- Southwest RRC
  PO Box 44064
  Capital Station
  626 North Forth Street
  Baton Rouge, LA 70804

- Upper Mid-West
  Burton Hall
  University of Minnesota
  Minneapolis, MN 55105

- HY RRC/400 Huntington Hall
  Syracuse University
  150 Marshall Street
  Syracuse, NY 13210

- Tri-State Midwest Regional Resource Center
  The Ohio State University
  356 Arps Hall
  1945 North High Street
  Columbus, OH 43210

- NW/RRC Clinical Service Building
  1590 Willamette Street
  Eugene, OR 97401

- Inter Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center
  Utah State University
  Execptional Child Center
  Logan, UT 84322

- NE RRC/Trinity College
  Colchester Avenue
  Burlington, VT 05401

The following are a few national and local agencies concerned with physically and mentally handicapped people with some indication of the kinds of services provided:

- American Association for the Abolition of Involuntary Mental Hospitalization, Inc.
  301 Sedgewick Drive
  Syracuse, NY 13203

  National Clearinghouse for information and referrals. Publishes directory of professional people who can be contacted for help in the area.

- American Foundation for the Blind, Inc.
  15 West 16th Street
  New York, NY 10011

  Consulting services; workshops, seminars and institutes; clearinghouse for information on blindness and work for the blind; and public education programs. "Directory of Agencies Serving Visually Handicapped Persons in the U.S." published biannually.

- Coordinating Council for Handicapped Children
  407 South Dearborn
  Chicago, IL 60605

Association of 55 parent and professional organizations in the Chicago area. Uses various educational methods to help parents with handicapped children.

- Goodwill Industries
  9200 Wisconsin Avneue, NW
  Washington, DC 20014

In over 200 cities. Community and day care centers, stores, camps, employment training and housing programs.

- Just One Break, Inc.
  373 Park Avenue, South
  New York, NY 10016

Since 1949. Seeks to provide the physically handicapped with full-time employment.

- Mental Health Program for the Deaf
  Saint Elizabeth's Hospital
  Washington, DC 20032

Individual and family counseling, vocational rehabilitation, education, speech therapy, recreational projects, dance and psychodrama.

- Muscular Dystrophy Associations of America, Inc.
  1790 Broadway
  New York, NY 10019

Over 320 chapters and a network of clinics throughout the U.S. offer medical services educational programs and research for professionals and the public.

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- National Association of the Deaf
  c/o Fred Schreiber
  814 Thayer Avenue
  Silver Spring, MD 20910

National clearninghouse and advocacy organization working to change attitudes and treatment of the deaf. Provides lists of publications, service contacts and other information.

- The National Association for Mental Health, Inc. (NAMA)
  1800 North Kent Street
  Rosslyn, VA 22209

Forty-three affiliated divisions nationwide provide service to patients and their families, educate and inform the public about mental illness.

- National Association for Retarded Citizens
  2709 Avenue E, East
  Arlington, TX 76011

Local groups work to develop new programs with state Associations for Retarded Citizens.

- National Easter Seal Society for Crippled Children and Adults
  2023 West Ogden Avenue
  Chicago, IL 60621

3,000 programs throughout the U.S. including hospital and mobile therapy units, treatment and rehabilitation centers, workshops and training programs for the handicapped.

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- National Federation of the Blind
  218 Randolf Hotel
  Des Moines, IA 50309

Informs the blind of their rights, undertakes court actions and demonstrations.

- National Multiple Sclerosis Society
  257 Park Avenue South
  New York, NY 10010
  Sylvia Lawry, Executive Director

Financial assistance and guidance in programs of research, education, treatment and therapy related to mutiple sclerosis.

- National Tuberculosis and Respiratory Disease Association
  1740 Broadway
  New York, New York 10019

National organizations with affiliated associations in all states. Involved in the fight against respiratory diseases. Sponsors educational programs, encourages community action and supports research projects.

- Recording for the Blind, Inc.
  215 East 58th Street
  New York, NY 10022
  Gilbert Field, Assistant Director,
  Public Relations

Provides recorded educational books and materials to sightless or physically handicapped. Volunteer readers and monitors used in 27 recording centers in 15 states.

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Also, the ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career and Vocational Education is an important source of information for articles, research, manuals and other materials for special needs populations. It is located at The National Center for Research on Vocational Education, 1906 Kenny Road, Columbus, Ohio, 43210. The Center has a toll free number: 800-227-ERIC.

The Coordinating Council for Handicapped Children's publication, No Discrimination/No Barrier, can be obtained by contacting them at 407 South Dearborn Street, Room 1075, Chicago, Illinois 60605.

Other agencies which can be of service include:

The National Rehabilitation Information Center
Eighth and Varnum Streets, NE
The Catholic University of America
Washington, DC 20064

Indiana Curriculum Materials Center
Indiana State University
Terre Haute, Indiana

Materials Development Center
Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Institute
School of Education
University of Wisconsin--Stout
Menomonie, Wisconsin 54751

Self-Assessment

Two self-assessment instruments are provided as guides for program review. One is for administrators and the other is for teacher/coordinators. These should help identify areas and elements in which improvement is desirable. The areas and elements are, in general, those discussed in the manual. Consequently the manual contains clues on how to go about making the indicated improvement.

The questions in the instruments do not cover the entire field of cooperative education for special needs students and some questions may not be appropriate for a specific program. The instruments are intended to be illustrative of the self-evaluations recommended by state departments of education.

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Self-Assessment* for Administrators

	Assessment
1. Funding for special supports and activities for students who are:	
a) handicapped	_____
b) educationally disadvantaged	_____
c) from economically disadvantaged families	_____
d) in other special need categories (attach description)	_____
2. Preparing students for employment:	
a) before 9th year	_____
b) during 9th year	_____
c) during 10th year	_____
d) during 11th year	_____
3. Vocational guidance	
a) parental involvement	_____
b) individual career plan	_____
c) follow up with teacher/coordinators	_____

* Please indicate a number or a percentage, if appropriate, otherwise indicate qualitative evaluation using the following scale:

0 = virtually none
1 = some, but poor
2 = satisfactory
3 = good
NA = not appropriate or not needed.

4. Percentage qualified for cooperative education, i.e. work ready, at the beginning of:

   a) 11th year _____
   b) 12th year _____

5. Support services for students with special needs (attach description of additional services for this population). _____

6. Implementation of design (attach description of superior and inferior implementation). _____

7. Recruitment of students to participate who are:

   a) handicapped _____
   b) educationally disadvantaged _____
   c) from economically disadvantaged families _____
   d) in other special need categories (attach description) _____

8. Percentage of students placed

   a) all students with special needs _____
   b) all students qualified to participate _____
   c) all students who requested to participate _____

9. Percentage of students of those who were placed, who completed cooperative education employment and received a letter of recommendation _____

10. Percentage of completers who obtained full-time employment within three months of graduation _____

Assessment

11. Students with special needs who were "mainstreamed" in placement

    a) identification _____
    b) records _____
    c) special services _____

12. Selection and preparation of teacher/ coordinators _____

13. Linkage with other support and resource systems for special needs students _____

14. Follow-up on graduates _____

15. Systematic evaluation and improvement of program _____

16. For assessments which were "poor" or "none" what should be done?

17. Other comments

Self-Assessment for Teacher/Coordinator

	Assessment *
1. Linkages with others who can provide information and resources	_____
a) special education teachers	_____
b) vocational counselors	_____
c) outside agencies	_____
d) parents	_____
e) other	_____
2. Records of previous years' experiences	_____
a) students' participation	_____
b) employers' participation	_____
c) resource sources	_____
d) problems and solutions	_____
e) evaluation	_____
f) recommendations	_____
3. Design and implementation to recruit students	_____
4. a) number of eligible students	_____
b) percentage of students enrolled	_____
5. Records of interested students	_____
6. Students' readiness for work	_____
a) preparation	_____
b) work behavior	_____
c) work skills	_____
7. Arrangements to qualify students for employment	_____

*A number or percentage if appropriate, otherwise indicate qualitative evaluation using following scale:

0 = virtually none
1 = poor
2 = satisfactory
3 = good
NA = not appropriate or not needed

Assessment

8. Career plans for students _____

9. a) number of appropriate work stations obtained _____
   b) number of students placed _____

10. Training agreements and plans _____

11. Preparation of supervisors _____

    a) orientation _____
    b) commitment _____
    c) training and experience _____
    d) to support monitoring and meetings _____

12. Support services for students _____

    a) counseling _____
    b) tutoring _____
    c) transportation _____
    d) stipend _____

13. JTPA arrangements and other supports for employers _____

14. Monitoring the implementation of training agreements and plans in school _____

15. Monitoring the implementation of training agreements and plans on the job _____

16. Monitoring students' progress _____

    a) in school _____
    b) work behavior _____
    c) work skills _____
    d) readiness for post-graduate full-time employment _____

17. Individual follow-up plans for students _____

18. Program evaluation _____

19. For assessments which are "poor" or "none" what should be done?

20. Other comments

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* The National Center for Research in Vocational Education publishes many useful materials. It is desirable to get on its mailing list.

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Report on Cooperative Programs for Transition from School to Work, prepared for the National Institute of Handicapped Research, U.S. Department of Education, through Harold Russell Associates, Inc. 235 Bear Hill Road, Waltham, Massachusetts 02154

ILLUSTRATIVE PROGRAM FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Project Work/Ability - California

This program is a coordinated effort at the state and local levels by the education, rehabilitation and employment development agencies. Funding is by the state and local education agencies with some support from the Job Training Partnership Act and services from the other state and local agencies.

In the 1983 - 84 school year, 229 schools in 20 Local Educational Agencies participated. There was average of 56 students in an LEA. The number ranged from 19 to 236 students. Activities (rated in order of importance by the State Department of Education) include: strong support and participation by education personnel, involving the community, recruiting employers developing and maintaining inter agency agreements, involving parents actively, and establishing working advisory committees.

While focused on work experience to prepare these students for transition to employment, the program actually is closer to cooperative education than many programs which go under this label. Work/Ability includes developing jobs, placing students according to their interests and abilities, providing follow up services to students and employers, and aiding in the transition to employment upon graduation. The follow up services include maintaining contact with students and employers through site visits and telephone calls, progress reports and evaluations to educational staff, arranging for remedial and special vocational training, counseling students, and consultation for employers.

Separate assessments of the program by the Department of Education, the Employment Development Department, and the Auditor General of California found the program to be successful. Factors which influenced the success of the work experience component were found to be:

- o Changing curriculums to provide vocational education to coordinate with work experience.
- o Local and state agencies working together to make more efffective use of resources and reducing duplication of activities thorough assessment of students' interests, abilities, aptitudes and work readiness.
- o Matching students to appropriate work expericence jobs by using assessment results.
- o Making work experience jobs accessible to students by considering work hours, developing jobs close to schools or homes, and by resolving transportation problems.
- o Involving employers willing to make accomodations for students when necessary. Employers often had to exercise patience, repeat instructions, and break jobs into smaller tasks.
- o Gaining employer commitment by providing subsidies for work experience, completing necessary paperwork, and paying for workers' compensation.
- o Making certain that all involved parties understand each agencys objectives, services, and limitations.
- o Joint planning to define roles and responsibilities to foster commitment to the project's objectives.
- o Starting participation in early high school years for students with greatest employability need
- o Monitoring work sites to solve work related problems

The responsibilites accepted by the participating state and local agencies are:

1. State Department of Education (SDE) - Vocational and Continuing Education Division agreed to the following responsibilites:
   - o Statewide project responsible office (Overall project management and overseeing individual projects)
   - o Identify problem areas and develop corrective actions as necessary

- o With EDD and SDR staff, assess individual projects
- o Provide technical assistance to local schools
- o Liaison activities with other states and local participating agencies
- o Conduct project director meetings
- o Act as project monitor
- o Tabulate and program student information forms for two-year longitudinal study of Work Ability students
- o Work with State Job Training Coordinating Council to develop PIC support for local Work Ability projects

2. State Department of Rehabilitation (SDR) agrees to the following responsibilities:

- o Designate appropriate staff as liaison to project
- o Provide technical assistance to local Department of Rehabilitation staff
- o Arrange as necessary for appropriate training to project staff
- o Assure that local Department of Rehabilitation staff provide
- o Assist in project monitoring through computerized client tracking system
- o Assist in problem identification and development of corrective actions as necessary
- o Liasion activities with other state and local participating agencies
- o Investigate cooperative program model as a means to continue Work/Ability in select number of sites

3. State Employment Development Department (EDD) agrees to the following responsibilities:

- o Designate appropriate staff as liaison to project
- o Provide technical assistance to local EDD offices in implementing local projects
- o If funding provided, process student information forms for Work/Ability in FY 1984 for SDE to complete the two-year longitudinal study of Work/Ability
- o Participate in liaison activities with other state and local paticipating agencies
- o Participate in project director meetings as necessary
- o Encourage Service Delivery Areas under JTPA to favorably consider support for Work/Ability projects

- o Disseminate Work/Ability information to local EDD officer

4. Local Education Agency (LEA)

- o Local project responsible office (Project management at local level
- o Identify and select project participants
- o Develop Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) in concert with Employment Development Department and/or Department of Rehabilitation staff
- o Develop assessment procedures with SDR and/or EDD staff to reduce duplication of testing students
- o Explore resources from othe community sources available
- o Provide classroom training, counseling and related services
- o Develop work experience slots with assistance from other agencies
- o Monitor work experience placements
- o Maintain project student information
- o Assist in job development and job placement
- o Inform community of project and activities
- o Liaison activities with other state and local participating agencies
- o Longitudinal follow-up to determine present employment or training status of graduates
- o Work with PIC representatives to develop support for local projects

5. Local Department of Rehabilitation (DR) Office

- o Identify potential participantys with LEA
- o Determine eligibility for Rehabilitation services through assessment information available from local education agencies
- o Assist in developing the Individualized Education Programs
- o Develop Individaulized Written Rehabilitation Programs for eligible particpants
- o Provide case services (supportive services)
- o Provide vocational counseling in concert with local school personnel

- o Provide training to local schools (Job clubs, SSI Self Support Plans)
- o Assist in monitoring of work experience placements/sites
- o Assist with placement into unsubsidized employment upon completion of training
- o Provide sixty-day follow-up to ensure that employment is suitable for student participants who are rehabilitation clients
- o Maintain liaison activities with other state and local participating agencies
- o Work with PIC representatives to develop support for local projects

6. Local Employment Development Department (EDD) Office

- o Assist in screening of potential project participants
- o Provide labor mareket information to local schools to assist them in developing Individualized Education Programs
- o Assist in developing work experience sites and selecting youth for placement into work experience
- o Provide Targeted Jobs Tax Credit information, and voucher eligible participants
- o Provide training to local schools, e.g., Job Search Training Workshops and Windmills
- o Provide intensive (extraordinary) job development and placement services for youth involved in Work Ability
- o Maintain liaison with other state and local participating agencies
- o Assist LEA and DR staff to obtain support for Work Ability from Private Industry Council under JPTA when proposals impact EDD

EXAMPLE

STUDENT'S WORK EVALUATION PERIOD_____to_____

Dear Employer:

Thank you for providing on the job learning experience for your student employee. The evaluation of your student employee's progress in acquiring positive work habits and performance on the job will provide the basis for your student's classroom instruction and counseling relations to work. Please complete both sides of this form and evaluation with your student employee.

After you and your student employee have discussed performance and progress in meeting your work expectations, please sign and date, and return to the teacher/coordiantor. Print names:

Student: Employer: Teacher/coordinator:

Substantiation of ratings and comments

We have reviewed and discussed the ratings and comments:

Student's Signature Date | Employer's Signature Date | Teacher's Signature Date

Student's name _____ Period _____ to _____

WORK Behavior	RATING*	IMPROVEMENT NEEDED**	PROGRESS DURING PERIOD ***
1. Appropriate Appearance			
2. Maintains Attendance Punctuality			
3. Cooperates with supervisors			
4. Cooperates with fellow employees			
5. Is dependable and reliable			
6. Observes company rules written and unwritten			
7. Shows initiative in starting tasks			
8. Productive			
9. Completes work			
10. Follows instructions			
11. Shows interest in work			
12. Shows interest in learning			
WORK PERFORMANCE****			
13. Has required competencies			
14. Has adequate work output			
15. Quality of work is satisfactory			
16. Understands instructions			
17. Makes good judments			
18. Knows and follows safety rules			
19. Communicates and expresses self well			
20. Maintains good custmer relations			

* A: always, U: usually, S: sometimes, R:rarely - note specific illustrative behavior and performance for each rating or, the reverse side.

**Indicate nature of degree of improvement needed

***Note relationship to "improvement needed" for the last period

****Note overall Work Performance evaluation